

# Safety Rules on the Water

By Burt Pride, LMD Steering Committee

As spring turns to summer, lake usage increases and we need to pay attention to county, state and federal safety regulations and laws.

Safety is everyone's responsibility. Please be respectful of others and lakefront properties so we may all share a SAFE and FUN Long Lake experience both on the water and along its shorelines. Here's a brief list of some of the most important rules and laws to remember:

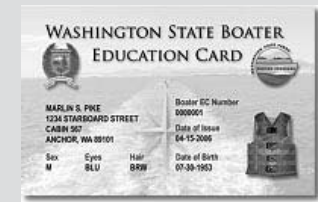
- ◆ **No drugs or alcohol!** It is illegal to operate any watercraft while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- ◆ **5 mph speed limits:** For the first 36 days of the fishing season, which begins April 24 this year, the speed limit is 5 mph in all areas of the lake, at all times of day. From May 29 (Saturday of Memorial Day weekend) until next year's fishing season begins, watercraft may travel up to 45 mph in the open basins only, EXCEPT at night and in the morning when the speed limit is 5 mph. The 5 mph limit is in effect from 8 p.m. or sunset, whichever occurs first, until 11 a.m. the following morning.

If you are unsure of the open basin areas, please see the map at the boat launch. A copy is also included on page 4 of this newsletter. The 5 mph limit applies at all times to the channels between the basins, the area north of the boat launch (this includes Long Lake Park and the rest of that bay) and the extreme north basin (the Mill Pond by Timberlake).



- ◆ **Stay 200 feet from all shorelines:** All vessels, watercraft, jet skis, towed boogie boards, wake boards and water skiers traveling above 5 mph are required by law to stay 200 feet from all shorelines, the boat launch and swim areas, and 100 feet from all other vessels. The wake from these vessels, wake boards and skies can cause substantial damage to shoreline property and bulkheads, and may endanger swimmers near the shore. You are liable for any damage you cause to public and private property by violating this distance law.
- ◆ **Personal flotation devices (PFDs):** PFDs must be on-board and be easily accessible on all watercraft with one (1) PFD required for each person aboard. Children 12 and under must be wearing a PFD at all times when underway in or on a vessel under 19 feet long. All jet ski operators must be over the age of 16 and wear a PFD.
- ◆ **Water skiing safety:** Any watercraft pulling a person (or persons) behind the vessel must have, in addition to the driver, an observer (over the age of 10) and a red or orange flag to be raised when the person is in the water behind the vessel. Persons being pulled must wear a Coast Guard approved PFD. All watercraft must travel in a counter-clockwise direction.

## Boater Education Card Required



Washington boaters are required to take and pass a boater education course and have their education card with them when operating a vessel of 15 horsepower or more in Washington waterways.

Boaters ages 30 years and younger are already required to carry the card when operating a boat. The card requirement for remaining age groups will be phased in through 2014, as shown below. (The requirements start on Jan. 1 of each year for each age group.)

2010: 30 years and younger  
2011: 35 years and younger  
2012: 40 years and younger  
2013: 50 years and younger  
2014: 59 years and younger

Boaters born before Jan. 1, 1955, are exempt from this law.

To meet the new education requirements, boaters can take approved courses in a classroom, online or at home. Once the course is passed, boaters pay \$10 for the card, which is good for a lifetime.

Boater Education Card information is available online at [www.parks.wa.gov/boating/boatered](http://www.parks.wa.gov/boating/boatered).



## Green Gardening

Warm weather is just around the corner and gardeners are starting to come out of hibernation. As you put your green thumb to work, consider using natural, slow-release fertilizers made from plant and animal by-products like cottonseed meal or bone meal. Slow-release fertilizers are less likely to leach into stormwater that enters Long Lake.

Need some advice on which products to choose? A new "Grow Smart, Grow Safe" guide rates 600 pesticides, fertilizers, and soil amendments for health and environmental hazards. Results are organized in easy-to-use categories that help you find lawn and garden products least hazardous to your pets and loved ones, wildlife, lakes, streams, and ground water.

This and other guides are available from the Thurston County Common Sense Gardening program, (360) 867-2674 or [www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg). Click on the guides and resources link. (TDD 360-867-2603)

## Lake is Well Stocked

The Department of Fish and Wildlife has already planted more than 10,000 catchable rainbow trout in Long Lake. The 2010 stocking plan calls for 15,000 more fish to be planted before opening day and later in May. Two thousand of these fish will be 14-inches or larger!

## Long Lake Speed Zone Map

In the map below, the light gray areas that stretch 200 feet out from the shorelines indicate 5 mph zones. The 5 mph speed limit in these zones applies 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The speed limit in the black areas is 5 mph for the first 36 days of fishing season, and then it becomes 45 mph. (The speed limit drops back down to 5 mph from 8 p.m. or sunset, whichever occurs first, until 11 a.m. the following morning.)

